

REMARKS**Summary of the Office Action**

Claims 1-8, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by European publication EP 1 083 405 A1 to Hirayama et al. ("Hirayama").

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicant has amended claims 1, 8, 10 and 11 to particularly point out and distinctly claim Applicant's invention.

Applicant submits herein a verified English language translation of foreign priority document JP2000-267954.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-8, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Hirayama. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a). Applicant submits that Hirayama should not be considered as prior art in the present application under any subsection of 35 U.S.C. § 102. On September 4, 2001, Applicant filed a certified copy of Japanese Patent Application No. JP2000-267954 which was filed in Japan on September 5, 2000, and claimed priority thereto. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.55(a), Applicant submits herein a verified translation of Japanese Patent Application No. JP2000-267954. The publication date of Hirayama is March 14, 2001, which is after the priority date to which this application is entitled. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Hirayama should not be considered as prior art

in the present application under any subsection of 35 U.S.C. § 102. Applicant requests that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a), of claims 1-8, 10 and 11, be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully requests that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner, placing all pending claims in condition for allowance. Applicant submits that the claim amendments do not raise new issues or necessitate additional search of the art by the Examiner.

Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite the prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: April 11, 2005

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